

I claim:

1 1. A server for handling messages transmitted to and from a plurality of clients over
2 a network, the messages having addresses attached to them, the server comprising:

3 a network interface for communicating with the clients by transferring a
4 markup language using a network protocol;

5 a mail server for sending and receiving messages over the network;

6 a channels assignment manager for assigning channel identifiers to be
7 used as parts of the addresses; and

8 a channels gateway for determining whether messages are authorized
9 messages based upon said channel identifiers.

1 2. The server of claim 1, wherein said network protocol is a protocol for rendering
2 using a markup language rendering tool

1 3. The server of claim 2, wherein the markup language rendering tool is a browser.

1 4. The server of claim 2, wherein said network protocol is selected from the group of
2 protocols consisting of WAP and HTTP.

1 5. The server of claim 1, wherein the markup language is a language selected from a
2 group consisting of XML, HTML, SGML and WML.

1 6. The server of claim 1, further comprising a message store for storing said
2 messages.

1 7. The server of claim 6, wherein messages received by the mail server from the
2 network are filtered by the channels gateway before being stored in the message store.

1 8. The server of claim 7, wherein the channel processing server performs a
2 preliminary function on the messages before they are stored in the message store.

1 9. The server of claim 8, wherein the preliminary function is stripping channel
2 identifiers from the addresses.

1 10. The server of claim 8, wherein the preliminary function is verifying digital
2 signatures contained in the messages.

1 11. The server of claim 8, wherein the preliminary function is decrypting the
2 message.

1 12. The server of claim 1, further comprising a personal channel agent for
2 administering channels.

1 13. The server of claim 12, wherein the network interface comprises at least one
2 channel control page for transmission to and from said client allowing the client to access
3 the personal channel agent.

1 14. The server of claim 13, wherein the network interface further comprises at least
2 one email administration page for transmission to and from said client.

1 15. The server of claim 14, wherein at least one of said channel control pages and at
2 least one of said email administration pages are transmitted to the client as a single
3 markup language page.

1 16. A method for presenting a message to a recipient in a network, the message
2 having an address for sending the message from a sender to the recipient wherein the
3 address comprises a common address portion that indicates the identity of the recipient in
4 the network and a channel identifier portion for verifying that the message is authorized,
5 the method comprising the step of:

6 transmitting to the recipient for simultaneous display, information in the
7 message and an identification of at least one correspondent from whom messages
8 containing the channel identifier portion of the address are authorized.

1 17. The method of claim 16, further comprising the step of providing at least one
2 function for the recipient to manipulate said identification of correspondents.

1 18. The method of claim 17, wherein said at least one function includes a function for
2 closing a channel identified by the identifier portion of the address.

1 19. The method of claim 16, wherein said transmitting step comprises transmitting
2 using a markup language.

1 20. The method of claim 16, wherein said transmitting step comprises transmitting
2 using a network protocol for rendering using a markup language rendering tool.

1 21. The method of claim 20, wherein the markup language rendering tool is a
2 browser.

1 22. The method of claim 20, wherein said network protocol is selected from a group
2 consisting of HTTP and WAP.

1 23. The method of claim 19, wherein the markup language is a language selected
2 from a group consisting of XML, HTML, SGML and WML.

1 24. The method of claim 16, wherein the channel identifier portion is a substantially
2 unguessable portion of the address.

1 25. A method for authenticating mail sent through a network from a first
2 correspondent to a second correspondent, comprising:
3 assigning a channel identifier for use by the first correspondent in sending
4 messages addressed to the second correspondent;
5 storing said channel identifier in an open channel database;
6 receiving through the network from the first correspondent a message
7 addressed using a modified address of the second correspondent wherein said channel
8 identifier is added to an address identifying the second correspondent in the network;
9 verifying that the channel identifier in the modified address is in the open
10 channel database, and
11 transmitting though the network to the second correspondent for
12 simultaneous display information derived from the message and information derived
13 from the open channel database.

1 26. The method of claim 25, wherein the information derived from the message
2 includes at least part of a non-address portion of a header of the message

1 27. The method of claim 25 wherein said transmitting step comprises transmitting
2 using a markup language.

1 28. The method of claim 27, wherein said transmitting step comprises transmitting
2 using a network protocol for rendering using a markup language rendering tool.

1 29. The method of claim 28, wherein the markup language rendering tool is a
2 browser.

1 30. The method of claim 28, wherein said network protocol is selected from a group
2 consisting of HTTP and WAP.

1 31. The method of claim 27, wherein the markup language is a language selected
2 from a group consisting of XML, HTML, SGML and WML.

1 32. The method of claim 25, wherein said channel identifier is substantially
2 unguessable.

1 33. A method for presenting a message to a recipient in a network, the message
2 having an address to send the message from a sender to the recipient wherein the address
3 comprises a common address portion that indicates the identity of the recipient in the
4 network and a channel identifier portion for verifying that the message is authorized for
5 delivery to the recipient, the method comprising the step of:

6 transmitting to the recipient for simultaneous display, an email
7 administration pane and a channel administration pane.